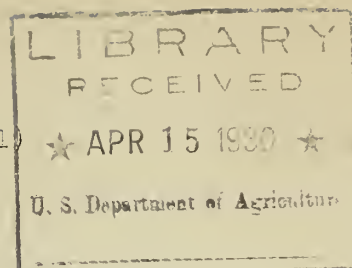


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Club Programs on Consumer Purchasing⁽¹⁾
Prepared by the
American Home Economics Association
and the
Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

One of the most serious problems the homemaker faces today is that of making intelligent purchases. Three generations ago, when women went shopping, they found a very limited number of kinds and qualities of articles from which to choose. Furthermore they were better judges of quality, because they themselves were accustomed to make in their own homes the sorts of things they saw displayed in the stores. The modern homemaker is faced with hundreds of different commodities in the retail market, many of them so constructed that it is impossible for her to judge their value from the casual inspection she can make before purchase. She is often unduly influenced by organized advertising and high-pressure salesmanship. In fact, every force of a competing commercial world is urging her to buy, but few of these are giving her information which will help her buy wisely.

Many women are realizing that, since the well-being of their families depends so largely on how the buying is done, it is essential that steps be taken to improve this situation. They are asking what can be done and how to go about it. The American Home Economics Association and the U. S. Bureau of Home Economics have been studying the problem and have come to believe that the best solution in the long run is for manufacturers and retailers to provide a set of specifications for at least the more staple articles. By "specifications" is meant a statement of actual facts concerning quality and performance. Specifica-

(1) For additional copies of these programs address the American Home Economics Association, Mills Building, Washington, D. C., or the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. They will be amplified and printed in permanent form in the near future.

tions on a refrigerator would tell its storage capacity, its shelf area, the temperature which it will maintain under standard conditions, and the amount of ice, electricity, or gas required to maintain that temperature. If the homemaker can find out the essential facts in regard to the construction of the things she wants to buy and what they will do under certain conditions, she can choose the ones best suited to her needs.

In most cases, manufacturers would be willing to give this information if they were convinced that women wanted it and would use the facts intelligently. It is therefore essential, that groups of women fully inform themselves on the subject and cooperate with those who are working on the problem. One way to do this is to study and discuss the matter in organized groups. The following suggestions have therefore been compiled, in the hope that they will adapt themselves for use in any type of woman's club that is studying modern problems.

DIFFICULTIES THE CONSUMER MEETS IN THE PRESENT MARKET

A discussion of this subject will serve as an introduction to a series of programs on consumer buying. The following references will give ample material sufficient for one general program. They should be available in your public library. If you write the following organizations, they will send free of charge literature describing what they are doing to help the consumer in her purchasing.

American Standards Association, 29 West 39th St., New York City

Consumers' Research, Inc., 47 Charles St., New York City

References

Anonymous

1928. Problems of the household buyer. 61 pages. Proceedings of a conference organized by the Department of Home Economics of the University of Chicago, held at the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, December 2 and 3, 1927. Ann Arbor, Michigan, Edwards Brothers.

This was a conference at which the problem of the consumer was discussed from the consuming, distributing and governmental points of view.

1930. Interesting the consumer in standards and specifications. Journal of Home Economics 22 (Mar.): 210
- Cook, R.
1928. Standardization or taking the guesswork out of buying. Journal of Home Economics 20 (Mar.): 164-166.
- Chase, S. and Schlink, F. J.
1927. Your money's worth. A study in the waste of the consumer's dollar. 285 p. New York City. The Macmillan Co.
- Edwards, A. L.
1929. Things we all want alike. Ladies' Home Journal 46 (Mar.): 86, 96-98
- Harap, H.
1924. The education of the consumer. 360 p. New York, The MacMillan Co.
- Klein, J.
1929. Two women at the counter. Ladies' Home Journal 46 (Mar.): 35, 217.
- O'Brien, A.
1930. Buying for the family. Journal of Home Economics 22 (Mar.): 197-200
- Schlink, F. J.
1927. Tests and specifications for the household. Journal of Home Economics 19 (Apr.): 181-184.
1929. The consumer must decide. Ladies' Home Journal 46 (Oct.): 104, 137.
- Williams, F. M.
1928. Stretching the household dollar. Survey Graphic 61 (Nov.): 151-2, 203
1929. Purchasing problems of the household buyer. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Oct.): 724-730.

FOOD STANDARDS AND GRADES

(Suggested as a topic for the second meeting)

The first development of food standards resulted from the enforcement of those phases of the Federal Food and Drugs Act which had to do with foods, and from the grading and standard packing of fresh fruits (chiefly apples and citrus fruits) by the fruit growers on the Pacific coast. Later standardization has been encouraged by the formulation and increasing use of specifications for various food products and by the adoption of standard food containers. The subject tends to fall under three heads.

Federal and State Food and Drug Acts ("Pure Food Laws")

Standards set up by the Federal Act pertain to the use of colors, preservatives, and poisonous and harmful ingredients in foodstuffs as well as to the regulation of labels on foods. A discussion of this subject should include a careful reading of those portions of the Act which pertain to foods and consideration of its limitations as well as the regulations for its enforcement. The definitions of foods as laid down under the Act should also be studied and the fact emphasized that the consumer must cooperate by reading the food labels provided, if the maximum benefit is to be derived from the law. Since this Act applies only to food shipped from one state to another, it would be well for groups interested in this subject to study local town and state food laws and their enforcement.

References

- Smith, K. A.
1924. Labels. Journal of Home Economics 16 (Oct.): 553-558.
- 1925. Take a look at the label. Good Housekeeping 80 (June): 83, 206-207, illus.
- 1929. Labels on packages of foodstuffs mean much to alert buyer. U. S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 405-408, illus.
- 1929. Present day enforcement of the pure food laws. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Dec.): 891-895.
- U. S. Dept. Agr., Food, Drug and Insecticide Administration.
1927. Regulations for the Enforcement of the Federal Food and Drugs Act. (Ninth revision). 19 p. U.S. Dept. Agr., S. R. A., F. D. 1, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢
- 1928. Definitions and Standards for Food Products. 20 p. U.S. Dept. Agr., S. R. A., F.D. 2, Rev.1. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 5¢
- 1929. The Food, Drug and Insecticide Administration of the U. S. Dept. Agr. 20 p. U.S. Dept. Agr. Misc. Pub. 48. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 10¢

Food Standards Now Existing

Consumers can find certain foods in retail markets labeled or graded to indicate that they measure up to Government or other standards. In the wholesale market such specifications are much more extensively used. These existing standards and grades may be procured by the group. Such questions may be discussed as (1) their value to the consumer, (2) how they should be improved, and (3) ways of getting them into more general use. It might be well to ask the members to look for graded foods in their local markets, and mention them to the retail merchants. These will be found in connection with such foods as meats, dairy products (milk grades and standards are usually set up by local or state authorities), fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, butter and canned goods.

The Committee on Foods of the American Medical Association, beginning in February, 1930, gives a critical report each week in the Journal of the American Medical Association on certain food products approved for advertising in the publications of the association, and for general advertising to the public. Information on any specific foods that have been passed upon by the committee may be obtained by addressing Dr. W. A. Puckner, American Medical Association, 535 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

References

Anonymous.

1929. Specifications for fresh fruits. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Mar.): 189-192.

Discusses the method by which government specifications for fresh fruits are developed.

Davis W. C.

1929. Beef grading and stamping protects consumer's interest. U.S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 144-146.

Describes the work of the government beef grading and stamping service.

National Live Stock and Meat Board.

This organization will send on request, material on meat grading.
Their Chicago address is 407 S. Dearborn St.

Potts, R. C.

1928. Butter certified as to quality brings profit, pleases buyer. U. S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 175-176.

Sherman, C. B.

1928. The consumer and standardizaion of food products. Journal of Home Economics 20 (Nov.): 801-803.

1928. Grading meats for veterans' hospitals. Modern Hospital 31 (Oct.): 82-83.

1928. Thanksgiving turkeys government graded. Practical Home Econ. 7 (Nov.): 327-328, illus.

Tenny, L. S.

1927. National standards for farm products. U. S. Dept. Agr. Circ. 8. 52 p. illus. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15¢

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

1929. Check list of standards for farm products formulated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. 6 p. Mimeographed. Will be sent, upon request, by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

This lists the standards for farm products set up by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics prior to September 1929. If you wish copies of any of the standards listed, they will be sent on request to the Division of Economic Information, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C. Be sure to state specifically which standards you wish, as they do not send complete sets.

Standard Food Containers, Measures, and Weights

Standards for containers, measures, and weights are found in connection with the marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables, canned goods, milk, and cream.

References

Anonymous.

1929. Specifications for fresh fruits. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Mar.): 189-192.

Smith, K. A.

1929. Labels on packages of foodstuffs mean much to alert buyer. U. S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 405-408, illus.

Spilman, H. A.

1929. Container act sets standard sizes for hampers and baskets. U. S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, 213-214.

and Davis, R. W.

1929. Containers used in shipping fruits and vegetables 36 p., illus. Farmers' Bul. 1579. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 10¢.

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

1929. Check list of standards for farm products formulated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Will be sent upon request by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Dept. Agr., Washington, D. C.

Standards for containers are listed on page 2 of this publication.

U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards.

1920. Buying commodities by weight or measure. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. of Standards, Misc. Pub. 45. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 10¢.

1929. Simplified practice, What it is and What it offers. 1928. 67 p. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15¢.

See individual simplified practice recommendations relating to containers.

1929. Glass containers for preserves, jellies, and apple butter. 14 p. U. S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards. R 91-29. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢.

BUYING TEXTILES AND CLOTHING

The many new fibers and finishes now used in textile materials make it almost impossible for the consumer to know the quality of what she is purchasing. The American Home Economics Association and the Bureau of Home Economics are advocating strongly that, especially in this field, the use of specifications would be extremely valuable. In planning club programs on this subject, it may be well to first consider the problem in a general way and then take up one textile commodity at a time.

The possibility of labeling blankets with quality specifications is now being considered by a number of groups. Upon petition of the American Home Economics Association, the American Standards Association is holding conferences of manufacturers, distributors, and consumers in an effort to have such specifications printed on the label fastened to each blanket offered on the retail counter. The American Home Economics Association is anxious that these should include statements in regard to the percentage of wool and cotton present and the weight, tensile strength, thread count, and heat insulation of the blanket. The labeling of sheets with information regarding their weight, thread count, tensile strength, and percent of sizing, is being discussed at a similar series of conferences called by the American Standards Association, in response to a petition of the American Home Economics Association. Information about both of these efforts and the progress being made will be sent, upon request, by the American Standards Association, 29 West 39th Street, New York City.

Efforts are also being made to secure and rest in specifications for hosiery. Miss Rosmond Cook, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, has been working on this subject and will send information upon request.

Silk weighting is another matter in which the American Home Economics Association has interested itself. A mimeographed report entitled "Summary of the Silk Weighting Controversy" will be sent upon request by the Association.

The above items are specifically mentioned because some progress has been made toward getting specifications set up for them. However, other textile materials are of equal importance and may well be studied by your group. Toweling, mattresses, rugs, table linen, and many others, all offer interesting subjects for consideration. The need of the proper sizing of patterns and ready-to-wear garments has been felt by all women and a discussion of the present situation and efforts being made to improve it may be of interest to your club.

The Nafal label issued by the National Association of Finishers of Cotton Fabrics, 320 Broadway, New York City, and the Lavelle label issued by the Spun Silk Research Committee, 386 Fourth Ave., New York, are mentioned because they are interesting examples of attempts being made by these groups to set up certain specifications for their products and so inform the public by labels on the goods.

References

General

Cook, R.

1926. Do your customers really know your product. Cotton and Its Products 2 (Jan.): 13.

1927. How can our method of buying textiles be made reliable? Journal Home Economics 19 (Jan.): 33-35.

Gives suggestions for ways by which the consumer can make use of standardization in her daily buying.

1928. Knowing what you buy in table linen. Ladies' Home Journal 45 (Mar.): 43, 58, illus.

1928. Selecting household towels. Ladies' Home Journal 45 (Feb.): 134, 145, illus.

Cranor, K. T., and Scott, C. L.

1928. The consumer and branded goods. Textile World 74 (Dec. 29): 3476.

A study of reactions to well known brands of textiles. Some interesting conclusions are drawn from replies to 500 consumers and 57 manufacturers of well known brands of textiles. Suggestions for the intelligent purchaser of textiles are offered.

Fitzgerald, A. A.

1927. Should merchants guarantee fabrics to the consumer? National Cleaner and Dyer 18 (Feb.): 77-78; (Mar.): 71-73.

The author is director of the Bureau of Research and Information, National Retail Dry Goods Assoc.

Broedman, P.

1928. Examining textiles from the retailer's point of view. American Dye-stuff Reporter 17 (Mar. 19): 190-192.

The author is director of the testing laboratory of Macy's (Department Store), 34th Street and Broadway, New York City.

Johnson, G. H.

1927. Textile fabrics. 377 p., illus. New York. Harper and Bros.

Written from the standpoint of use, wear, and launderability. The author is the director of the department of research of the Laundryowners' National Association and incorporates the experimental results of this department in the book. Pages 156-160 deal specifically with testing fabrics before purchasing.

McCullough, H. E.

1929. The textiles we buy and use. Ill. Univ. Agr. Expt. Sta. Circ. 347, 93 p., illus. Urbana, ill., 25¢

Short description of textile fibers, and fabric weaves and finishes, together with tests for quality and durability. Contains a chapter on cost of textiles and how women may develop better textile service.

O'Brien, R.

1926. Selection of cotton fabrics. 22 p., illus. U. S. Dept. Agr. Farmers' Bul. 1449. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢

1927. Textile standardization: An S. O. S. from the Textile Section. Journal of Home Economics 19 (Sept.): 519-521.

1929. Clothing the Clubhouse. Woman's Journal 14 (June): 36, 38, 40-41, illus.

Stevenson, L. and Lindsay, M.

1926. Methods of testing the absorption of water by cotton toweling. Journal of Home Economics 18 (Apr.): 193-198.

Blankets

Anonymous.

1928. Ruling on part wool blanket branding. Textile World 73 (Mar.31): 1985.

1929. Standards, blankets, silk, hosiery, and the consumer. Journal of Home Economics 21 (May): 355-358.

Edwards, A. L.

1930. Bed blankets, for example. Journal of Home Economics 22 (Mar.): 200-203.

Sale, P. D., and Hedrick, A. F.

1924. Measurement of heat insulation and related properties of blankets. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards Technol. Paper 266. 17 p., illus. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 10¢

U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards.

1924. Bed blankets. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards, R 11. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢.

Whitson, H.M.

1928. When you buy blankets. Good Housekeeping 87 (Sept.): 90-91, illus.

Cotton materials

Fisher, K.

1928. Colors that are fast is what women are asking for today. Good Housekeeping 87 (July): 91, 132.

Reports a survey of housewives with regard to color fastness.

1928. The colors are fast if they carry the Nafal label. Good Housekeeping 88 (Dec.): 84, illus.

Describes the Nafal tag issued by the National Association of Finishers of Cotton Fabrics to cotton finishers whose goods meet specified standards of color fastness. These tags are attached to each bolt, in the case of piece goods.

Himebaugh, L. C.

1929. Fast colors for cotton in demand. Commerce and Finance 18: 1247 (June 5).

Mr. Himebaugh is connected with the Pease Laboratory, which has charge of testing the cotton goods submitted for permission to use the Nafal label.

Hosiery

Anonymous.

1929. Standards, blankets, silk, hosiery and the consumer. Journal of Home Economics 21 (May): 355-358.

Cook, R.

1929. A consumer study of hosiery advertising. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Dec.): 905-908.

Schenke, E. M., and Scheffstall, C. W.

1926. Standard hosiery lengths. U. S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards Technol. Paper 324. 14 p., illus. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 10¢.

Ready-made Clothing: Sizes

Dunn, M. A., and Cranor, K. T.

1927. A need for the standardization of pattern sizes. Journal of Home Economics 19 (June): 329-331.

Nystrom, P. H.

1928. Economics of fashion. 521 p., illus. New York. The Ronald Press.
Contains a chapter on the standardization of sizes and types of apparel.

O'Brien, R.

1929. Need for garment size standards. U.S. Dept. Com., Com. Standards Mo. 6 (Dec.): 168-169.

-
1930. Garment sizes and body measurements. U. S. Dept. Agr., Bureau of Home Economics. (In press) Mimeographed copies obtainable on request to Bur. of Home Economics, U. S. Dept. Agr., Washington, D. C.

U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards.

1929. Standard sizes of knit underwear

A mimeographed list of types of underwear for which standard sizes have been formulated by the Associated Knit Underwear Manufacturers of America in cooperation with the Bureau of Standards. Copies of the list are available upon request to the Textile Section, Bur. Standards, U. S. Dept. Com., Washington, D. C.

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1930. Dress patterns. 12 p. U. S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards CS13-30. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢.

Sheeting

Cook, R.

1928. When the bride selects bed linens. Ladies' Home Journal 45 (Jan.): 118, 130, illus.

Furry, M. S.

1929. Some specifications of wide cotton sheetings bought on the retail counter. Textile World 76 (Aug. 31): 1169, 1171.

, and Edgar, R.

1928. An analysis of wide cotton sheetings. Journal of Home Economics 20 (June): 429-442.

Griffith, M. and Edgar, R.

1928. Deterioration of five wide cotton sheetings due to laundering. Journal of Home Economics 20 (Feb.): 111-120, illus.

O'Brien, R. and Steele, J.

1929. Where sheets wear out. Textile World 75 (April 13): 2393, 2427, illus.

Silk

Anonymous.

1929. Plan tub silk trade-up: standardization program announced by Spun Silk Research Committee. Textile World 76 (Aug. 17) 895, 955.

1929. Standards, blankets, silk, hosiery and the consumer. Journal of Home Economics 21 (May):355-357.

Clair, E. L., and Mack, P. B.

1929. Effect of dry cleaning on unweighted and weighted silk. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Nov.): 850-854.

Cohen, I. and Mack, P. B.

1929. Effect of home laundry methods upon the breaking strength of unweighted and weighted silk. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Nov.): 854-855.

Corbett, J. R.

1929. A new wash silk launched on national scale. The Melliand 1 (Dec.) 1377-1383, illus. Reprints available from Spun Silk Division of Silk Association of America, 386 Fourth Avenue, N. Y. C.

This describes the specifications required by the Spun Silk Division of the Silk Association for tub silk goods licensed by them to bear the "Lavelle" label. This label guarantees that the material so marked is pure dye, fast to washing, and equals or excels certain specified standards as regards construction. This Division has taken the name "The Spun Silk Research Committee of New York".

Forbes, W. M., and Mack, P. B.

1929. The effect of tin weighting on the nitrogen content and physical properties of silk. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Nov.): 841-849.

Furry, M. and Edgar, R.

1928. Study of weighted silk fabrics. Journal of Home Economics 20 (Dec.): 901-905.

Goldman, H. M., Hubbard, C. C., and Schiffstall, C. W.

1926. The effect of dry cleaning on silks. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards Technol. Paper 322, 20 p. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15p

O'Brien, R.

1929. The timid home economist and the question of silk weighting. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Sept.): 650-651.

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO HELP THE CONSUMER

In studying this topic, such questions as the following may be considered:-

What are government specifications? Wherein are these helpful to the consumer? Wherein are they not helpful to her? What quality standards has the government set up for commodities? What is the Federal Trade Commission doing to help the consumer? What is "Simplified Practice"? What is the "willing-to-certify" plan? (Information on this plan will be sent if requests are addressed to the Bureau of Standards, U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Washington, D. C.)

References

Harriman, N. F.

1927. Organization and Work of the Federal Specifications Board. 4 p.
(Mimeographed)
Available upon request to the Federal Specifications Board,
Washington, D. C.

Tenny, L. S.

1927. National standards for farm products. U.S. Dept. Agr. Circ. 8. 52 p.,
illus. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15¢.

U.S. Federal Trade Commission

1929. Annual report of the Federal Trade Commission, fiscal year 1929. 234 p.
Includes reports of decisions on alleged cases of misrepresentation
and a review of activities in connection with trade conferences.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards.

1925. National directory of commodity specifications. 379 p. Superintendent
of Documents, Washington, D. C. \$1.25
Contains about 27,000 specifications prepared by the Federal
Specifications Board and by State, City and public utility purchasing
agents and technical and trade associations and societies. Nearly
2,000 of these relate to textiles, and about 3,000 to foods.

1929. Alphabetical index and numerical list of U. S. Government Master Spec-
ifications promulgated by the Federal Specifications Board, complete to
Nov. 1, 1929. 18 p. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Stand. Circ. 378. Obtain-
able upon request to the Federal Specifications Board, Washington, D.C.

Gives a list of federal specifications. They represent minimum
standards in government purchasing; specifications are given for sheeting;
carpets and rugs; stitches and seams, soaps, brushes, and brooms, window
shades, towels, rubber goods and other household materials. The full text
of any specification may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents,
Washington, D. C. 5¢ each.

1928. Simplified Practice. What it is and What it offers. 1928 edition. 67 p., illus. U. S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards, R 11 - 28, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15¢

Gives resumé of all simplified practice recommendations through 1928. The following are of interest in household purchasing

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|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| R- 2: Beds, Springs and Mattresses. | R-54: Sterling Silver Flatware |
| R- 5: Hotel Chinaware. | R-55: Tinware, galvanized and japanned ware |
| R-10: Milk Bottles and Caps. | R-64: Containers for vegetable shortening |
| R-11: Bed Blankets. | R-74: Hospital and institutional cotton textiles |
| R-33: Cafeteria and restaurant Chinaware. | R-91: Glass containers for preserves, jellies and apple butter |
| R-39: Dining car Chinaware. | |
| R-40: Hospital Chinaware. | |
| R-52: Staple Vitreous China | |
| Plumbing fixtures | |

(Individual recommendations, Superintendent of Documents 5¢ each.)

WAYS IN WHICH YOUR CLUB CAN AID IN SECURING INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS

1. As each topic, i. e., food, clothing, and equipment, is discussed, ask your members to list some commodities which in your opinion could be purchased more satisfactorily if they were labeled with quality or performance information (specifications).

2. Ask them to list the qualities for each commodity about which they would like definite information before purchasing. If this is too long, ask that they select a few of the most important. A careful consideration of a few will be more helpful than casual attention to a larger number.

3. Mail the reports thus obtained to the American Home Economics Association, Mills Building, Washington, D. C., or the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. If desired, forms for recording this information will be sent. These reports will be very helpful to the officers of the American Home Economics Association and the staff of the Bureau of Home Economics in planning and carrying on work along this line.



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Club Programs on Consumer Purchasing⁽¹⁾

Prepared by the
American Home Economics Association
and the

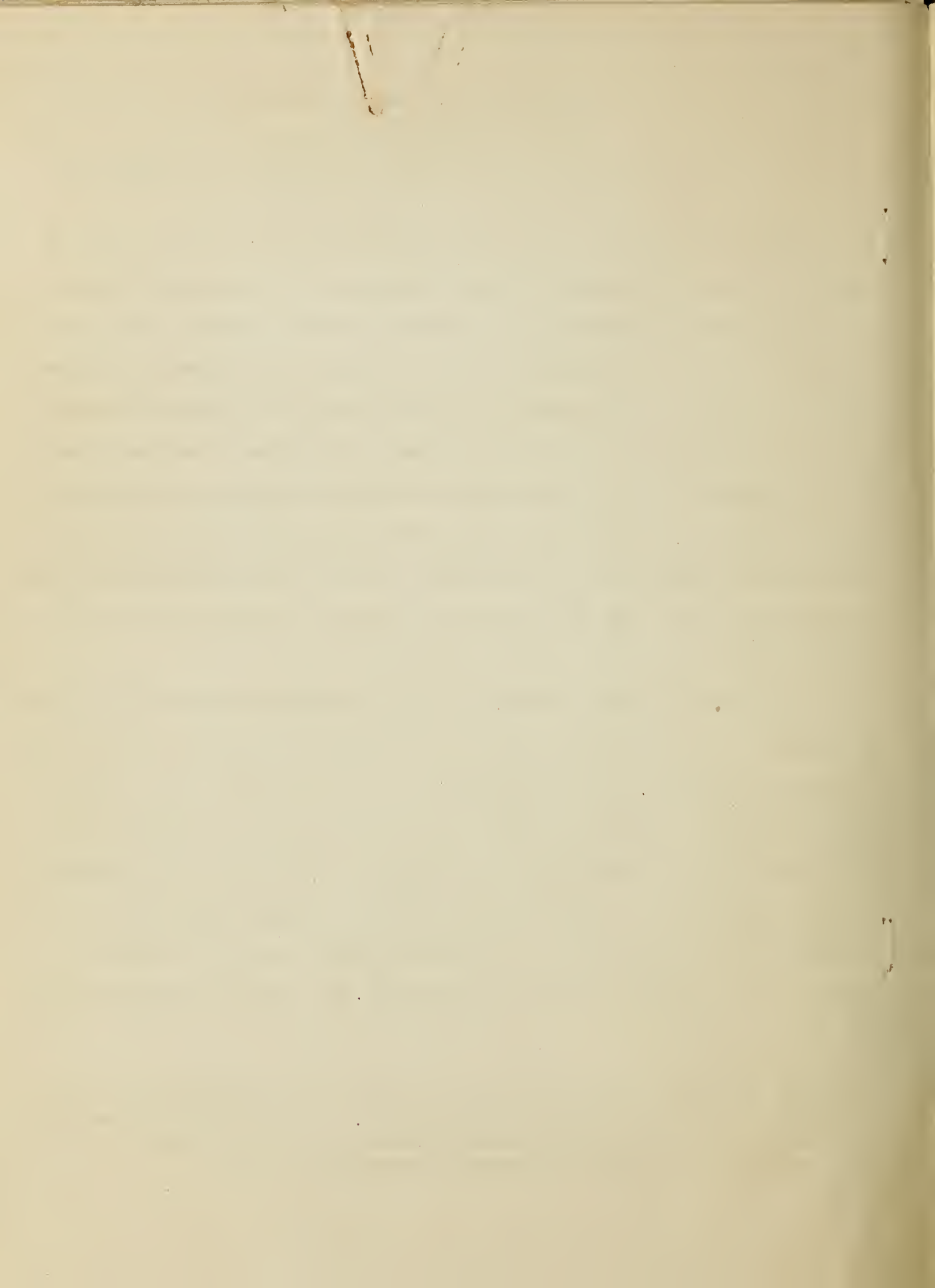
Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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Undoubtedly the most serious problem the homemaker faces today is that of making intelligent purchases. Two generations ago, when women went shopping, they found a very limited number of kinds and qualities of articles from which to choose. Then too, having made so many of the same things themselves at home, they knew quality very thoroughly. The modern homemaker is faced with hundreds of different commodities in the retail market, many of them so constructed that it is impossible for her to judge their value from the casual inspection she can make at the store. She is often unduly influenced by organized advertising and high-pressure salesmanship. In fact, every force of a competing commercial world is urging her to buy, but few of these are giving her information which will help her buy wisely.

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American Standards Association, 29 West 39th St., New York City.

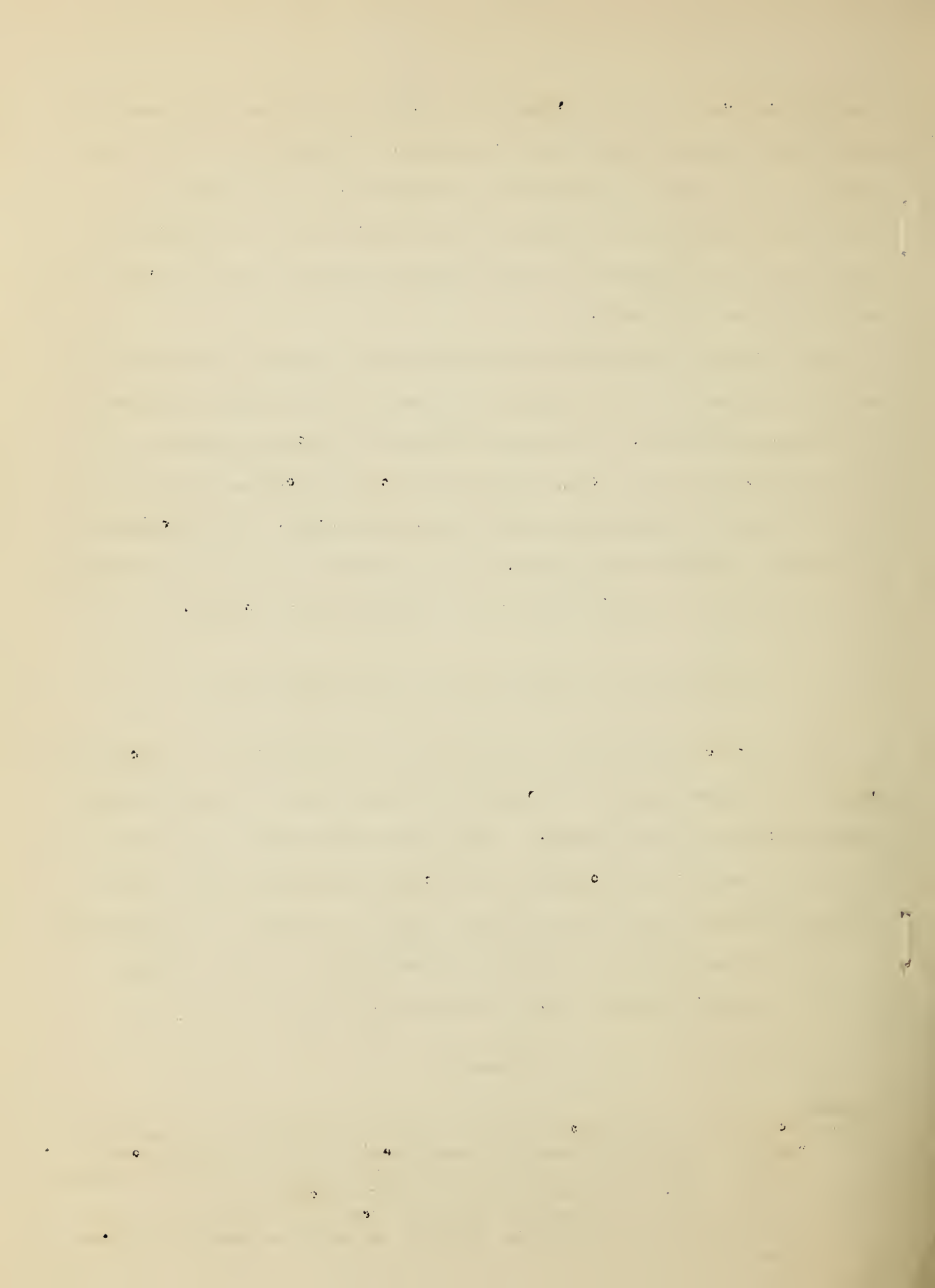
Consumers' Research, Inc., 47 Charles St., New York City.

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1928. Problems of the household buyer. 61 pages. Proceedings of a conference organized by the Department of Home Economics of the University of Chicago, held at the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, December 2 and 3, 1927. Ann Arbor, Michigan, Edwards Brothers.

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1930. Interesting the consumer in standards and specifications. Journal of Home Economics 22 (Mar.): 210.
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1928. Standardization or taking the guesswork out of buying. Journal of Home Economics 20 (Mar.) 164-166.
- Chase, S. and Schlink, F. J.
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FOOD STANDARDS AND GRADLES
(Suggested as a topic for the second meeting)

The first development of food standards resulted from the enforcement of those phases of the Federal Food and Drugs Act which had to do with foods, and from the grading and standard packing of fresh fruits (chiefly apples and citrus fruits) by the fruit growers on the Pacific coast. Later standardization has been encouraged by the formulation and increasing use of specifications for various food products and by the adoption of standard food containers. The subject tends to fall under three heads.

Federal and State Food and Drug Acts ("Pure Food Laws")

Standards set up by the Federal Act pertain to the use of colors, preservatives, and poisonous and harmful ingredients in foodstuffs as well as to the regulation of labels on foods. A discussion of this subject should include a careful reading of those portions of the Act which pertain to foods and consideration of its limitations as well as the regulations for its enforcement. The definitions of foods as laid down under the Act should also be studied and the fact emphasized that the consumer must cooperate by reading the food labels provided, if the maximum benefit is to be derived from the law. Since this Act applies only to food shipped from one state to another, it would be well for groups interested in this subject to study their own town and state food laws.

References

Smith, K. A.

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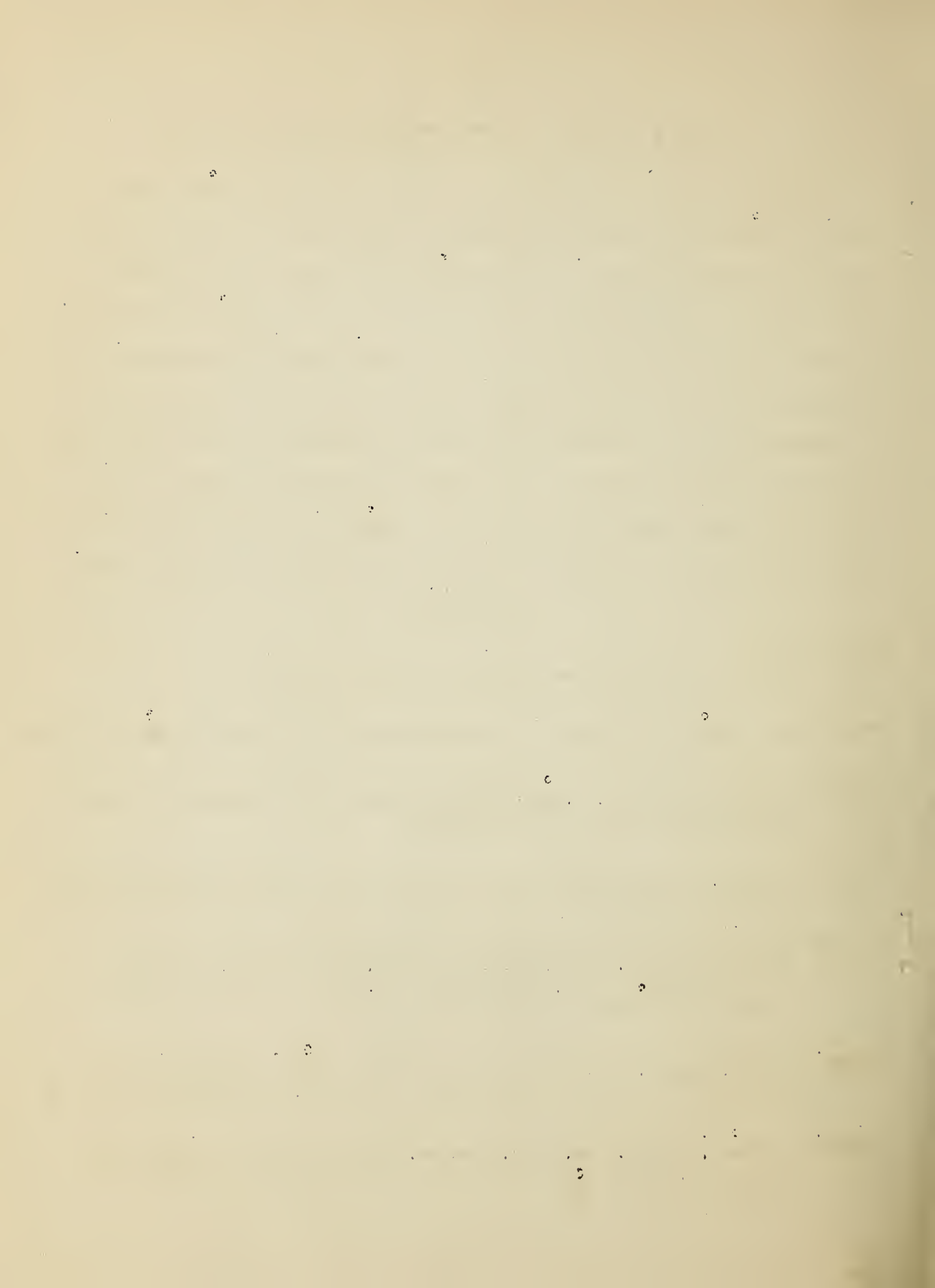
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U.S. Dept. Agr., Food, Drug and Insecticide Administration.

1927. Regulations for the Enforcement of the Federal Food and Drugs Act. (Ninth revision). 19 p. U.S. Dept. Agr., S. R. A., F. D. 1, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢

1928. Definitions and Standards for Food Products. 20 p. U.S. Dept. Agr., S.R.A., F.D. 2, Rev. 1. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 5¢

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Food Standards Now Existing

Consumers can find certain foods in retail markets labeled or graded to indicate that they measure up to Government or other standards. In the wholesale market such specifications are much more extensively used. These existing standards and grades may be procured by the group. Such questions may be discussed as (1) their value to the consumer, (2) how they should be improved, and (3) ways of getting them into more general use. It might be well to ask the members to look for graded foods in their local markets, and mention them to the retail merchants. They will be found in connection with such foods as meats, dairy products (milk grades and standards are usually set up by local or state authorities), fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, butter and canned goods.

The Committee on Foods of the American Medical Association, beginning in February, 1930, gives a critical report each week in the Journal of the American Medical Association on certain food products approved for advertising in the publications of the association, and for general advertising to the public. Information on any specific foods that have been passed upon by the committee may be obtained by addressing Dr. W.A. Puckner, American Medical Association, 535 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

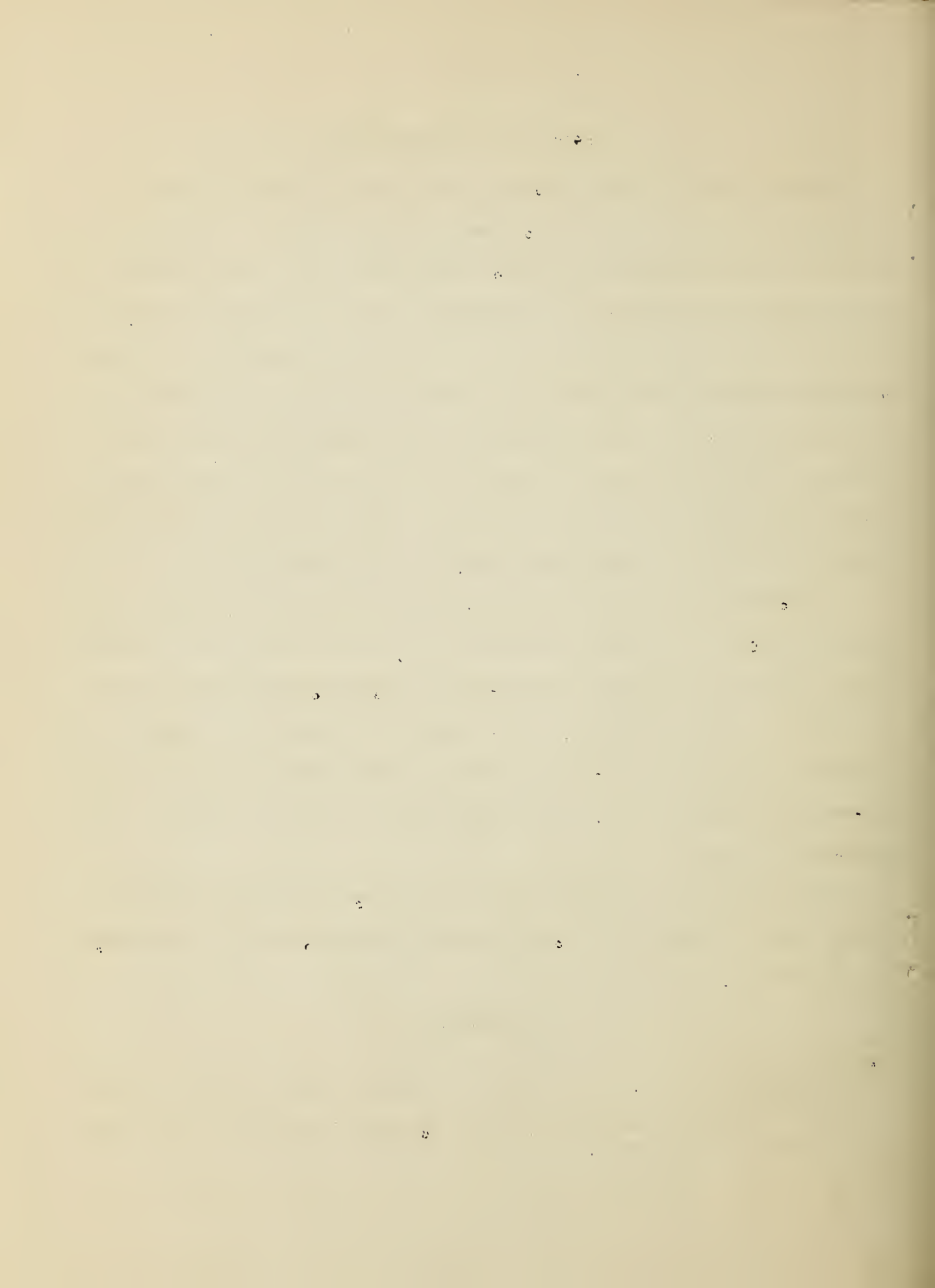
A label in the form of a shield, bearing the words "Accepted - American Medical Assoc. - Committee on Foods", has been devised for use on foods approved by the committee.

References

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Discusses the method by which government specifications for fresh fruits are developed.



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1929. Beef grading and stamping protects consumer's interest. U. S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 144-146.

Describes the work of the government beef grading and stamping service.

National Live Stock and Meat Board.

This organization will send on request material on meat grading. Their Chicago address is 407 S. Dearborn St.

Potts, R. C.

1928. Butter certified as to quality brings profit, pleases buyer. U.S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 175-176.

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1928. Grading meats for veterans' hospitals. Modern Hospital 31 (Oct.): 82-83.

1929. Thanksgiving turkeys government graded. Practical Home Econ. 7 (Nov.): 327-328, illus.

Tenny, L. S.

1927. National standards for farm products. U.S. Dept. Agr. Circ. 8. 52 p. illus. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15¢

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

1929. Check list of standards for farm products formulated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. 6 p. Mimeographed. Will be sent, upon request, by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

This lists the standards for farm products set up by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics prior to September 1929. If you wish copies of any of the standards listed, they will be sent on request to the Division of Economic Information, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Washington, D. C. Be sure to state specifically which standards you wish, as they do not send complete sets.

Standard Food Containers, Measures, and Weights

Standards for containers, measures, and weights are found in connection with the marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables, canned goods, milk, and cream.

References

Anonymous,

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Downing, F. P., and Spilman, H. A..

1924. Standard baskets for fruits and vegetables. U.S. Dept. Agr. Farmers' Bul. 1434 F. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢

Smith, K. A.

1929. Labels on packages of foodstuffs mean much to alert buyer. U.S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 405-408, illus.

Spilman, H. A..

1929. Container act sets standard sizes for hampers and baskets. U. S. Dept. Agr. Yearbook 1928, p. 213-14.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

1929. Check list of standards for farm products formulated by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Will be sent upon request by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Dept. Agr., Washington, D. C.

Standards for containers are listed on page 2 of this publication.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards.

1920. Buying commodities by weight or measure. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. of Standards, Misc. Pub. 45. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 10¢

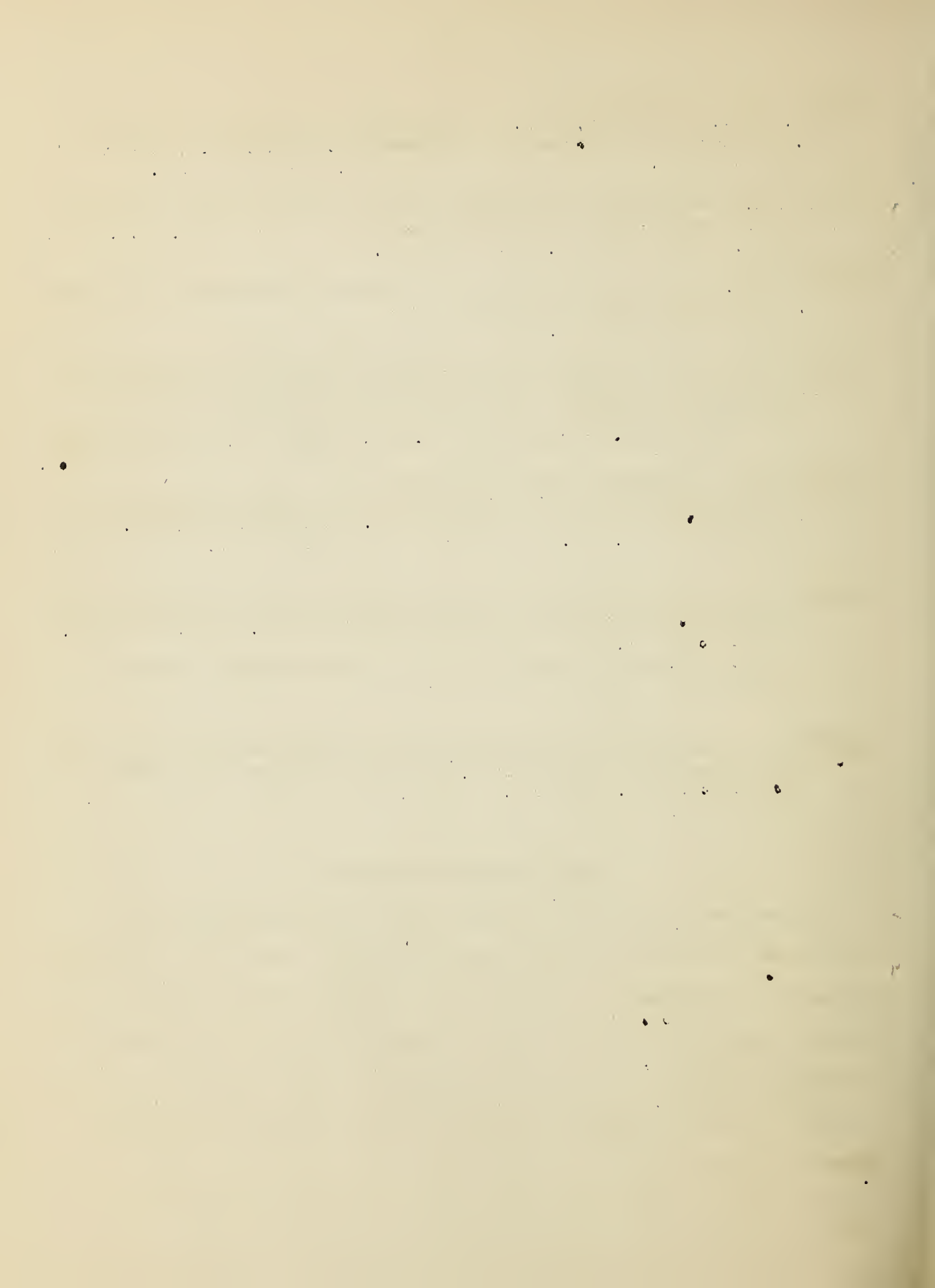
1929. Simplified practice, What it is and What it offers. 1928. 67p. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15¢.

See individual simplified practice recommendations relating to containers.

1929. Glass containers for preserves, jellies and apple butter. 14 p. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards. R 91-29. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢

BUYING TEXTILES AND CLOTHING

The many new fibers and finishes now used in textile materials make it almost impossible for the consumer to know the quality of what she is purchasing. The American Home Economics Association and the Bureau of Home Economics are advocating strongly that, especially in this field, the use of specifications would be extremely valuable. In planning club programs on this subject, it may be well to first consider the problem in a general way and then take up one textile commodity at a time.



The possibility of labeling blankets with quality specifications is now being considered by a number of groups. Upon petition of the American Home Economics Association, the American Standards Association is holding conferences of manufacturers, distributors, and consumers in an effort to have such specifications printed on the label fastened to each blanket offered on the retail counter. The American Home Economics Association is anxious that these should include statements in regard to the percentage of wool and cotton present and the weight, tensile strength, thread count, and heat insulation of the blanket. The labeling of sheets with information regarding their weight, thread count, tensile strength, and percent of sizing, is being discussed at a similar series of conferences called by the American Standards Association, in response to a petition of the American Home Economics Association. Information about both of these efforts and the progress being made will be sent, upon request, by the American Standards Association, 29 West 39th Street New York City.

Efforts are also being made to secure interest in specifications for hosiery. Miss Rosamond Cook, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio, has been working on this subject and will send information upon request.

Silk weighting is another matter in which the American Home Economics Association has interested itself. A mimeographed report entitled "Summary of the Silk Weighting Controversy" will be sent upon request by the Association.

The above items are specifically mentioned because some progress has been made toward getting specifications set up for them. However, other textile materials are of equal importance and may well be studied by your group. Toweling, mattresses, rugs, table linen, and many others, all offer interesting subjects for consideration. The need of the proper sizing of patterns and ready-to-wear garments has been felt by all women and a discussion of the present situation and efforts being made to improve it may be of interest to your club.

The Nafal label issued by the National Association of Finishers of Cotton Fabrics, 320 Broadway, New York City, and the Lavelle label issued by the Spun Silk Research Committee, 386 Fourth Ave., New York, are mentioned because they are interesting examples of attempts being made by these groups to set up certain specifications for their products and so inform the public by labels on the goods.

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Gives suggestions for ways by which the consumer can make use of standardization in her daily buying.

1928. Knowing what you buy in table linen. Ladies' Home Journal 45 (Mar.): 43-48, illus.

1928. Selecting household towels. Ladies' Home Journal 45 (Feb.): 134, 145, illus.

Cranor, K. T., and Scott, C. L.

1928. The consumer and branded goods. Textile World 74 (Dec. 29): 3476

A study of reactions to well known brands of textiles. Some interesting conclusions are drawn from replies to 500 consumers and 57 manufacturers of well known brands of textiles. Suggestions for the intelligent purchaser of textiles are offered.

Fitzgerald, W. A.

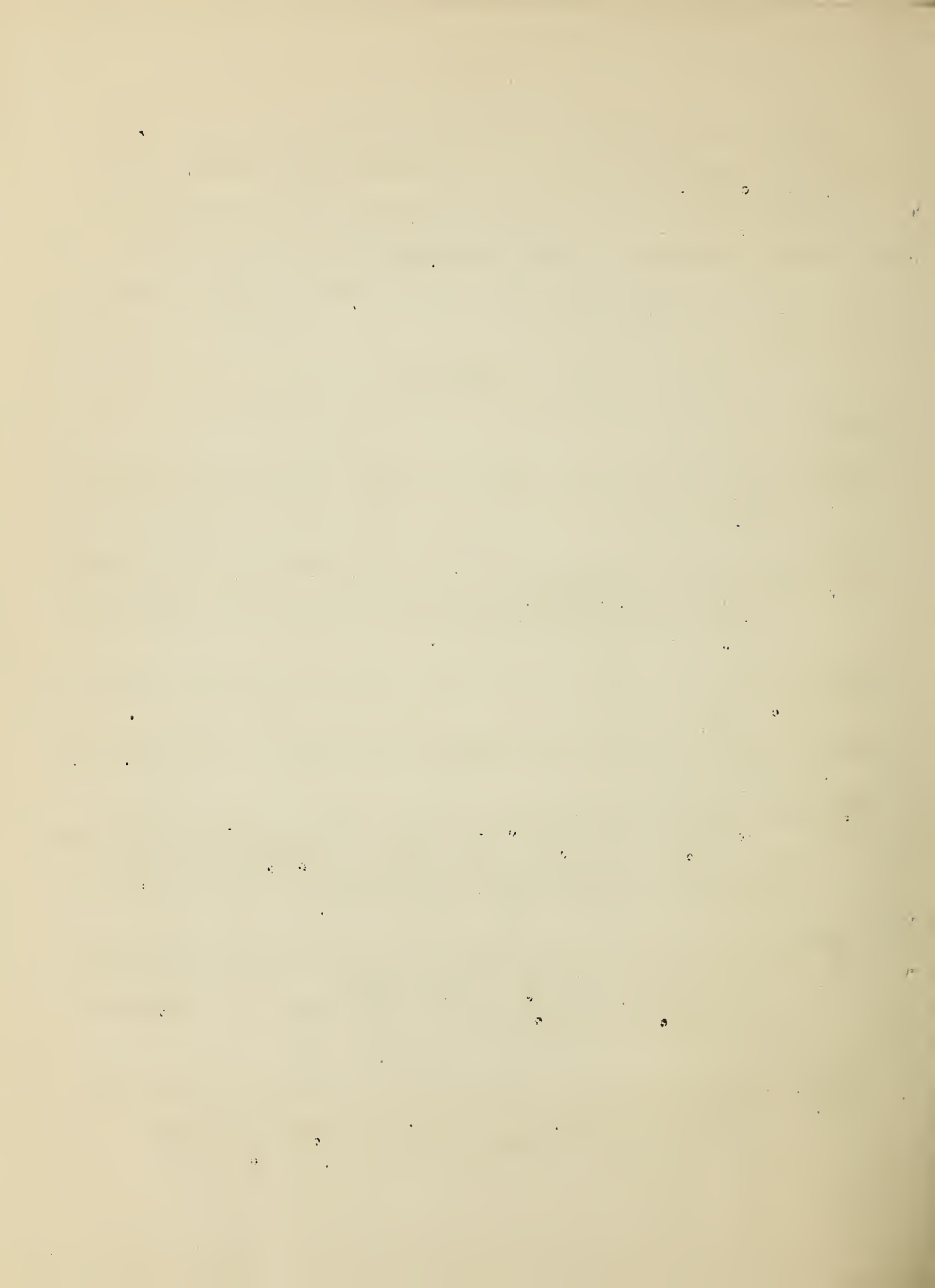
1927. Should merchants guarantee fabrics to the consumer? National Cleaner and Dyer 18 (Feb.): 77-78; (Mar.): 71-73.

The author is director of the Bureau of Research and Information, National Retail Dry Goods Assoc.

Freedman, E.

1928. Examining textiles from the retailer's point of view. American Dye-stuff Reporter 17 (Mar. 19): 190-192.

The author is director of the testing laboratory of Macy's (Department Store) 34th Street and Broadway, New York City.



Johnson, C. H.

1927. Textile fabrics. 377 p., illus. New York. Harper and Bros.

Written from the standpoint of use, wear, and launderability. The author is the director of the department of research of the Laundryowners' National Association and incorporates the experimental results of this department in the book. Pages 156-160 deal specifically with testing fabrics before purchasing.

McCullough, H. E.

1929. The textiles we buy and use. Ill. Univ. Agr. Expt. Sta. Circ. 347, 93 p., illus. Urbana, Ill., 25¢

Short description of textile fibers, and fabric weaves and finishes, together with tests for quality and durability. Contains a chapter on cost of textiles and how women may develop better textile service.

O'Brien, R.

1926. Selection of cotton fabrics. 22 p., illus. U. S. Dept. Agr. Farmers' Bul. 1449. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢.

1927. Textile standardization: An S. O. S. from the Textile Section. Journal of Home Economics 19 (Sept.): 519-521.

1929. Clothing the clubhouse. Woman's Journal 14 (June): 36, 38, 40-41, illus.

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1929. Standards, blankets, silk, hosiery, and the consumer. Journal of Home Economics 21 (May): 355-358.

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1930. Bed blankets, for example. Journal of Home Economics 22 (Mar.): 200-203

Sale, P. D., and Hedrick, A. F.

1924. Measurement of heat insulation and related properties of blankets. U.S. Dept. Agr., Bur. Standards Technol. Paper 266. 17 p., illus. Superintendent of Document, Washington, D. C. 10¢.

U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards.

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Whitson, H. M.

1928. When you buy blankets. Good Housekeeping 87 (Sept.): 90-91, illus.

Cotton materials

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1928. Colors that are fast is what women are asking for today. Good Housekeeping 87 (July): 91, 132.

Reports a survey of housewives with regard to color fastness.

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Describes the Nafal tag issued by the National Association of Finishers of Cotton Fabrics to cotton finishers whose goods meet specified standards of color fastness. These tags are attached to each bolt, in the case of piece goods.

Himebaugh, L. C.

1929. Fast colors for cotton in demand. Commerce and Finance 18: 1247. (June 5)

Mr. Himebaugh is connected with the Pease Laboratory, which has charge of testing the cotton goods submitted for permission to use the Nafal label.

Hosiery

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Cook, R.

1929. A consumer study of hosiery advertising. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Dec.): 905-908.

Schenke, E. M., and Schoffstall, C. W.

1926. Standard hosiery lengths. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards Technol. Paper 324. 14 p., illus. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 10¢.

Ready-made Clothing: Sizes

Dunn, M. A., and Cranor, K. T.

1927. A need for the standardization of pattern sizes. Journal of Home Economics 19 (June): 329-331.

Nystrom, P. H.

1928. Economics of fashion. 521 p., illus. New York. The Ronald Press.
Contains a chapter on the standardization of sizes and types of apparel.

O'Brien, R.

1929. Need for garment size standards. U.S. Dept. Com., Com. Standards Mo. 6 (Dec.): 168-169.

1930. Garment sizes and body measurement. U.S. Dept. Agr., Bureau of Home Economics. (In press) Mimeographed copies obtainable on request to Bur. of Home Economics, U. S. Dept. Agr., Washington, D. C.

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1929. Standard sizes of knit underwear

A mimeographed list of types of underwear for which standard sizes have been formulated by the Associated Knit Underwear Manufacturers of America in cooperation with the Bureau of Standards. Copies of the list are available upon request to the Textile Section, Bur. Standards, U. S. Dept. Com., Washington, D. C.

1930. Dress patterns. 12 p. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards CS13-30. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 5¢

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Furry, M. S.

1929. Some specifications of wide cotton sheetings bought on the retail counter. Textile World 76 (Aug. 31): 1169, 1171.

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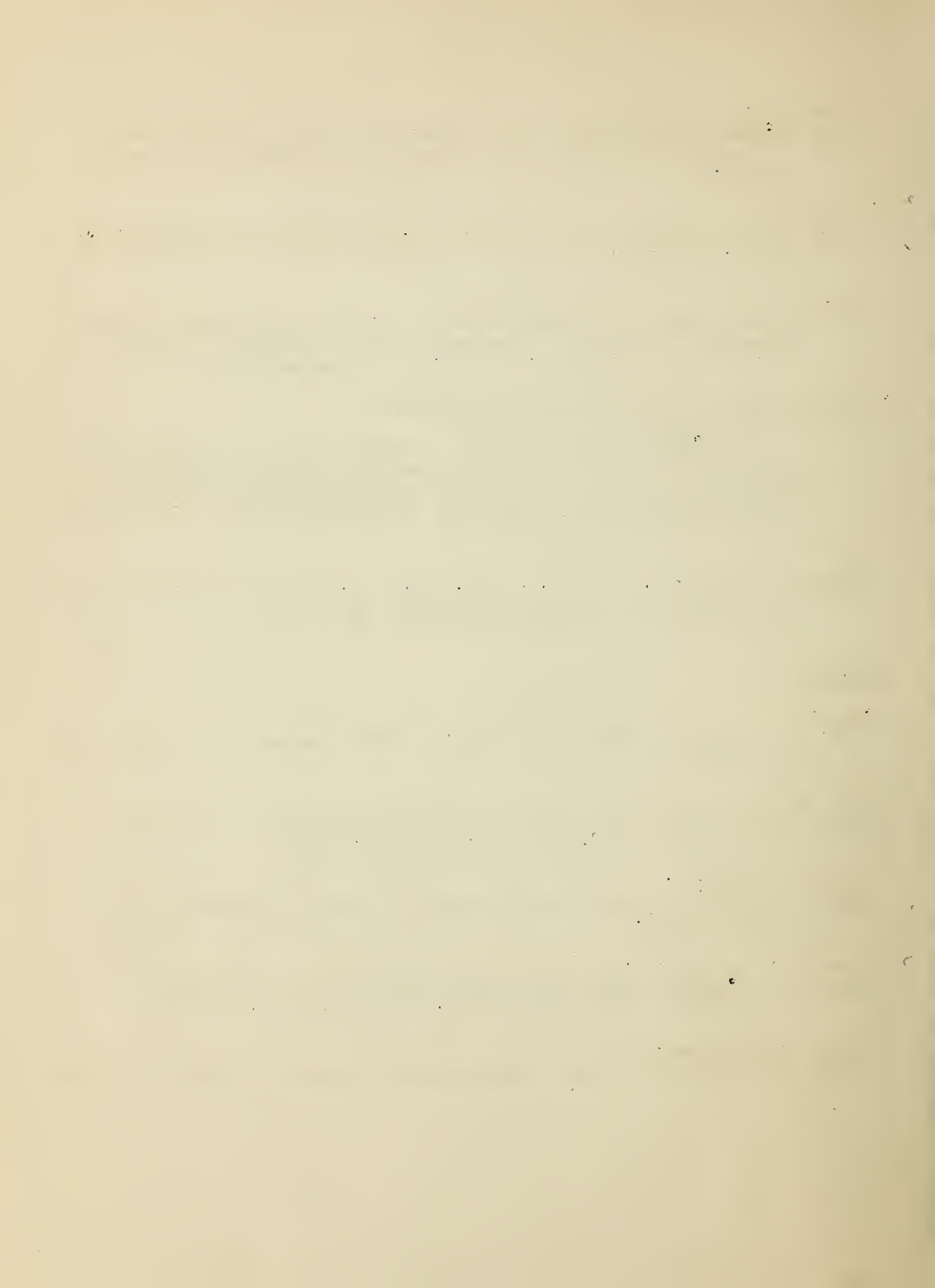
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1929. Standards, blankets, silk, hosiery and the consumer. Journal of Home Economics 21 (May): 355-357.

Clair, E. L., and Mack, P. B.

1929. Effect of dry cleaning on unweighted and weighted silk. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Nov.): 850-854.

Cohen, B. and Mack, P. B.

1929. Effect of home laundry methods upon the breaking strength of unweighted and weighted silk. Journal of Home Economics 21 (Nov.) 854-855.

Corbett, J. R.

1929. A new wash silk launched on national scale. The Melliand 1 (Dec.) 1377-1383, illus. Reprints available from Spun Silk Division of Silk Association of America, 386 Fourth Ave., N. Y. C.

This describes the specifications required by the Spun Silk Division of the Silk Association for tub silk goods licensed by them to bear the "Lavelle" label. This label guarantees that the material so marked is pure dye, fast to washing, and equals or excels certain specified standards as regards construction. This Division has taken the name "The Spun Silk Research Committee of New York".

Forbes, J. M., and Mack, P. B.

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Furry, M. and Edgar, R.

1928. Study of weighted silk fabrics. Journal of Home Economics 20 (Dec.): 901-905.

Goldman, H. M., Hubbard, C. C., and Schoffstall, C. W.

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O'Brien, R.

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WHAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN DO TO HELP THE CONSUMER

In studying this topic, such questions as the following may be considered:-

What are government specifications? Wherein are these helpful to the consumer? Wherein are they not helpful to her? What quality standards has the government set up for commodities? What is the Federal Trade Commission doing to help the consumer? What is "Simplified Practice"? What is the "willing-to-certify" plan? (Information on this plan will be sent if requests are addressed to the Bureau of Standards, U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Washington, D. C.)

References

Harriman, N. F.

1927. Organization and Work of the Federal Specifications Board. 4 p.
(Mimeographed)
Available upon request to the Federal Specifications Board,
Washington, D. C.

Tenny, L. S.

1927. National standards for farm products. U.S. Dept. Agr. Circ. 8
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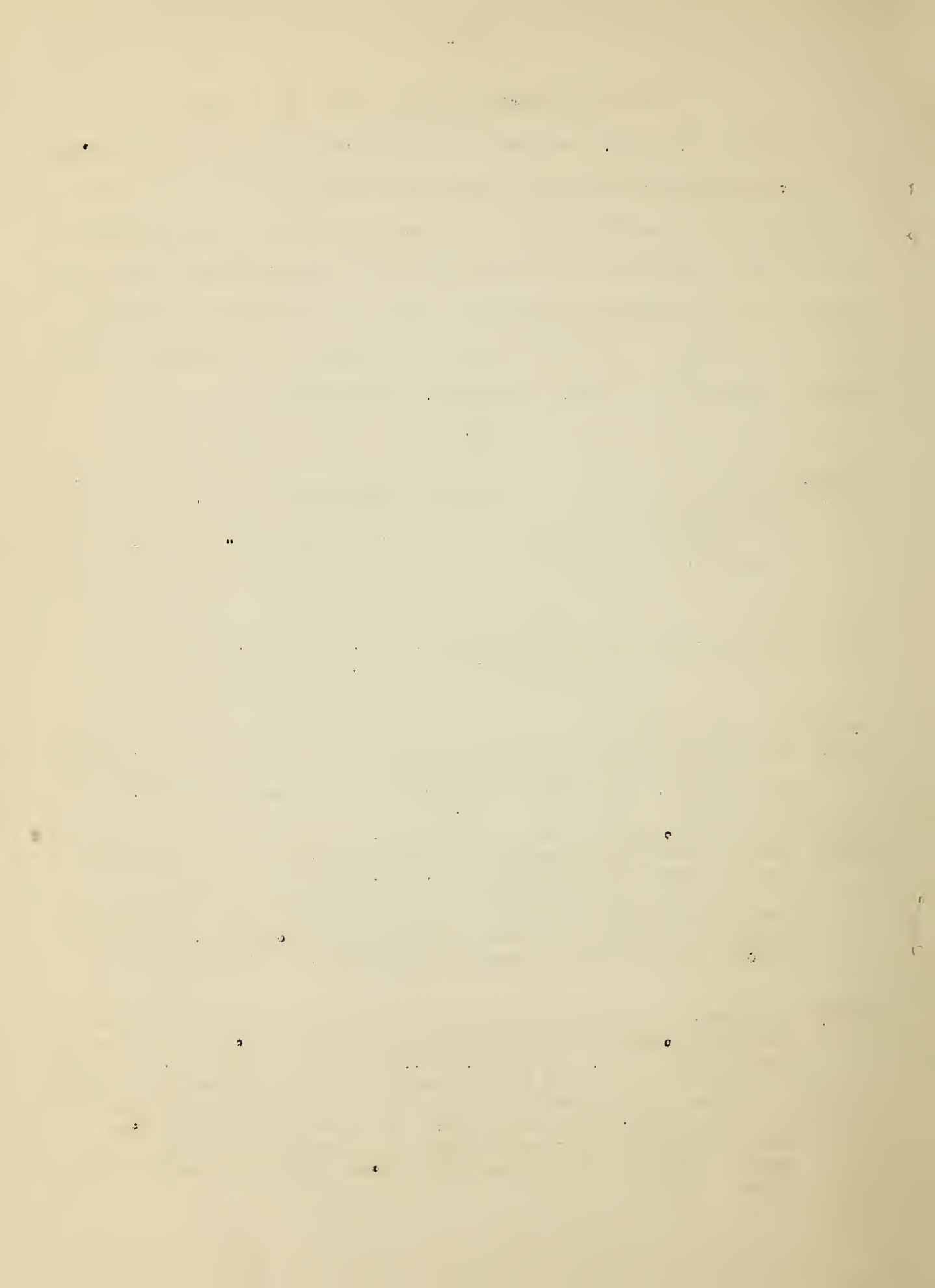
U.S. Federal Trade Commission.

1929. Annual report of the Federal Trade Commission, fiscal year 1929. 234 p..
Includes reports of decisions on alleged cases of misrepresentation
and a review of activities in connection with trade conferences.

U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Standards.

1925. National directory of commodity specifications. 379 p. Superinten-
dent of Documents, Washington, D. C. \$1.25.
Contains about 27,000 specifications prepared by the Federal
Specifications Board and by State, City and public utility purchasing
agents and technical and trade associations and societies. Nearly
2,000 of these relate to textiles, and about 3,000 to foods.

1929. Alphabetical index and numerical list of U.S. Government Master Speci-
fications promulgated by the Federal Specifications Board, complete to
Nov. 1, 1929. 18 p. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Stand. Circ. 378. Obtain-
able upon request to the Federal Specifications Board, Washington, D.C.
Gives a list of federal specifications. They represent minimum
standards in government purchasing; specifications are given for
sheeting; carpets and rugs; stitches and seams, soaps, brushes, and
brooms, window shades, towels, rubber goods and other household mater-
ials.



1929. Simplified Practice. What it is and What it offers. 1928 edition. 67 p., illus. U.S. Dept. Com., Bur. Standards, R 11 - 28. Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. 15¢.

Gives resumé of all simplified practice recommendations through 1928. The following are of interest in household purchasing:

R- 2: Beds, Springs and Mattresses.	R- 39: Lining car Chinaware.
R- 5: Hotel Chinaware.	R- 40: Hospital Chinaware.
R-10: Milk Bottles and Caps.	R- 52: Staple Vitreous China
R-11: Bed Blankets.	Plumbing fixtures
R-33: Cafeteria and Lunch room Chinaware.	R- 54: Sterling Silver Flatware.

WAYS IN WHICH YOUR CLUB CAN AID IN SECURING INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS

1. As each topic, i.e., food, clothing and equipment, is discussed, ask your members to list the commodities which could be purchased more satisfactorily if they were labeled with quality or performance information (specifications).

2. Ask them to give in detail the particular facts they would want to know about each of the commodities included in the list they have prepared. If this is too long, ask that they select a few of the most important. A careful consideration of a few will be more helpful than casual attention to a larger number.

3. Mail the reports thus obtained to the American Home Economics Association, Mills Building, Washington, D. C., or the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. If you desire, forms for recording this information will be sent. These reports will be very helpful to the officers of the American Home Economics Association and the staff of the Bureau of Home Economics in planning and carrying on work along this line.

